

REMARKS

The Final Office Action dated August 9, 2004 has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. The present Amendment cancels claim 1 and amends claim 4 to include all the limitations of claim 1. Claims 2-3 and 6 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 4. Claims 7-11 are allowed. No new matter has been added.

Initially, the Examiner is thanked for allowing claims 7-11 and for confirming the allowance of claims 7-10 in a telephonic interview on September 14, 2005 in order to clarify any discrepancies in the Final Office Action. Further, the Examiner is thanked for indicating that the subject matter of claims 4-6 defines over the prior art of record. In particular, the Examiner objects to these claims as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but will allow such claims if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Of pending claims 1-6, only claims 1-3 stand rejected as confirmed in the telephonic interview on September 14, 2005. Claim 4 has been amended to include all the limitations of claim 1 and claim 6 now depends from allowable claim 4. Although claim 6 removes limitations that somewhat overlap amended claim 4, claim 6 includes all of the limitations of independent claim 4 and continues to add further limitations thereto. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 6, like claim 4, is also allowable. Applicants also wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that such amendment would not affect the allowability of claim 6, in a telephonic interview on November 8, 2005. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,977,733 to Samejima et al. (hereinafter "the '733 patent"). Applicants have herein canceled claim 1 for reasons unrelated to the relevance of the '733 patent. Thus the rejection of claim 1 is moot. Dependent claims 2 and 3 now depend from, and add further

limitations to, allowable independent claim 4. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that claims 2-6, which all depend from allowable claim 4, are patentable over the cited prior art and in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of claims 2-6 is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-0650.

Respectfully submitted,
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